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For Immediate Release

October 05, 2011

USAID Organizes Coral Triangle Initiative Training



Photo Caption: U.S. Ambassador Teddy Taylor greets a participant from Papua New Guinea during the opening of the USAID-funded Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) training program September 19.

Port Moresby – The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) invited 25 academics, government officials and environmentalists from Papua New Guinea (PNG) and the Solomon Islands to attend a highly specialized training program in marine biodiversity and conservation September 29. Organized by USAID’s Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) Support Program, the event attracted experts from the University of Rhode Island Coastal Resource Center, University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute and U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

USAID seeks to help coastal communities adapt to climate change. The training focused on the science of climate change, hazards of that change to coastal ecosystems and communities, and ways that these communities and local governments can address negative impacts.

U.S. Ambassador Teddy Taylor underscored the importance of sharing local knowledge as well as new methods that have been shown to mitigate climate change. “The key to this is teamwork,” said Ambassador Taylor at the opening of the program September 19. “No one party has all the right answers. The United States has experience addressing these issues, but everybody’s vision is different.”

PNG participants included those from key marine biodiversity conservation sites such as Kimbe Bay, Milne Bay and Manus Province as well as those from the Department of Environment and Conservation, Department of Provincial and Local Government Affairs, and academics from the University of Papua New Guinea. Counterparts from the Solomon Islands were from Western and Choiseul Provinces and the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology. In addition, The Nature Conservancy, Conservation International, World Wildlife Fund, World Fish Center and Center for Locally Managed Areas sent representatives.

About the Coral Triangle Initiative

The U.S. CTI Support Program is a five-year project that seeks to improve coastal and marine resources management in the Coral Triangle. The Triangle, the most diverse marine environment in the world, encompasses Indonesia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Solomon Islands and Timor Leste. In 2009, the six countries came together to form the Coral Triangle Initiative to preserve this unique marine and coastal environment.

Protecting this asset is of considerable importance to the United States, said Ambassador Taylor, who stressed the U.S. commitment to CTI and its pursuit of effective community-based measures to protect the approximately 120 million people who live in the region’s vulnerable coastal communities.

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